



Connect!

REAL RELATIONSHIP MARKETING IDEAS



Double your sphere, double your referrals!

by CHAD RUEFFERT

In advertising media planning there are two basic terms that define the parameters of any campaign—reach and frequency. Reach is the total number of people exposed to your message at least once. Frequency is the average number of times someone is exposed to your message. To build a successful campaign marketers look to have the widest possible reach and a high level of frequency.

In relationship marketing terms your reach is determined by the size of your sphere of influence. For most real estate professionals, whose goal should be to work by referral, your reach is way too limited.

If you'd like to increase your marketing reach here are some solid ideas for increasing and improving your sphere of influence.

Your Sphere Should Be Made of People You WANT to Work With

Real estate agents have a common misconception that their sphere of influence can only be made up of people they already know and have a deep connection with. Those may be the most likely people to want to give you a referral, but they are

most definitely not the only potential referral sources out there. Your sphere of influence should be made up of people who are well connected and highly respected. Individuals who have enough esteem that others value their opinion. Be brave in deciding who belongs in your sphere. You don't have to settle for your second cousins and college buddies, unless they are actually great referral sources. Why not target the mayor and the local city council? Or heads of the Chamber of Commerce and Better Business Bureau? Figure out who can really help you build your business and add them to your marketing sphere. Even if you don't have an existing relationship with them, by adding them to your sphere you will begin to build influence.

Your Specialization Helps Determine Your Sphere

Whether you farm a geographical area, specialize in short sales, focus on luxury homes, or have any other specialization, if you are looking to build your sphere of influence you should focus on the people and professionals in this arena. If you farm a neighborhood, find the members of the local HOA boards, target the administration of local schools, include area merchants and retailers. These are the people who have influence

on your target audience and you should begin working to have influence on them. The same holds true for more "psychographic" farms. If you focus on luxury home buyers, add people to your farm that have influence on affluent people. Financial advisors, retirement planners, jewelers, luxury car salespersons. To build your sphere, connect with the people who are connected to your target audience.

Your Sphere Builds Your Sphere

If you've already built a quality sphere, and are looking to expand, reach out to the people you're currently connected to and ask for connections to other like-minded people. Someone worthy of being in your sphere isn't just a good source of referrals, but also a good source of other referral sources!

Nothing more directly affects the number of referrals you can receive than the size of your sphere. Go out there and double your sphere and you'll likely double the number of referrals you receive.

Chad Rueffert is president of Braintree Marketing, Inc. and the creator of the From Your Friends Relationship Marketing Program.

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